

FOREIGN TOPICS.

THE BERLIN HEALTH BULLETINS DISCREDITED.

A Boulanger Demonstration—Bismarck Declines a Duke's Title—Drought in Cuba—Etc.

(SPECIAL DISPATCHES TO THE RECORD-UNION.)

THE EMPEROR.

A Disbelief in the Reliability of the Health Bulletins.

LONDON, April 27th.—The Times has received a dispatch from Berlin, which says: "Doubt arises as to the value of the recent optimistic bulletins in regard to the Kaiser's condition. Although he is reported to be improving daily, the impression is growing that a painful surprise is in store for the public."

MUCH STORMIER.

Berlin, April 27th.—A bulletin issued this morning says the Emperor had a good sleep last night, and feels much stronger this morning.

QUITE PARISIAN.

Boulanger Gives a Dinner, and is Whipped Up by the Crowd.

PARIS, April 27th.—General Boulanger gave his political banquet at the Cafe Richelieu this evening. There was a crowd of about 1,000 persons outside the cafe at 6 p. m. General Boulanger and Count Dillon arrived at 7 o'clock. The crowd rallied to an enormous size, entirely stopping traffic, and there were frequent cries of "Vive Boulanger" and "A bas Ferry!"

At 11 p. m. there were about 4,000 persons outside the cafe.

General Boulanger, responding to M. Naquet's toast to the former health, wished to utter his most emphatic protest against the charge that he aspired to the Dictatorship. M. Naquet's toast was raised in the Chamber, he would vote to abolish the Presidency.

PARIS, April 27th.—The Boulanger demonstration at Nancy was resumed to night. The people refused to disperse, and were charged upon by mounted gendarmes. Finally the crowd was dispersed, and they moved off with shouts of "Vive Boulanger!"

CANT COME DOWN.

A Shogun Wants Kilmarn to Reduce His Weight.

LONDON, April 27th.—The Australian, who has been talking about a match with Jake Kilrain, desired that the latter should fight at 125 pounds, the possibility of so greatly reducing himself is out of the question, and the match is off. Lee boasts that he intends to challenge Jack Dempsey.

WATCHING AND WAITING.

The Canadian Premier Prays for the Passage of the Tariff Bill.

OTTAWA, April 27th.—Sir Charles Tupper delivered a speech in the House of Commons this afternoon. He showed a probable deficit of \$1,000,000 for the year ending March 31st, and said that he had been applying for further tariff changes, but that the Government had not proceeded to make any change in the tariff. He said that he had referred to the very unpleasant relations that were then threatened between the United States and Canada. He said that he had been driven away by the fisheries treaty which had been concluded between the two countries. He said that he had been driven away by the fisheries treaty which had been concluded between the two countries.

CUBA.

A Severe Drought Causes Ruin to the Crops in Cuba.

HAVANA, April 27th.—The drought continues. Large fields are reported in the sugar-producing districts. The streams have receded, and the crops are suffering. The sugar product is seriously estimated from 10 to 20 per cent, as compared with last year.

CANADA.

Germany and Sweden Interested in the Behn Meyer Circumstances.

OTTAWA, April 27th.—In response to a call for correspondence relative to the seizure by the United States of British vessels in the Bering Sea, the Canadian Government has been in communication with the German and Swedish Governments have taken part in the dispute, and prove to be as greatly interested in the matter as Great Britain or Canada. A discussion will probably result in an International Convention in the interests of protection of the fisheries.

WAR VESSEL ASHORE.

HALIFAX, April 27th.—An unknown war vessel, which has been reported to be in the harbor, has been seen to be in the harbor.

THE CHAMBERLAIN GOSPEL.

LONDON, April 27th.—The New York correspondent of the Daily News cables to his paper Mr. Endicott's denial of the report that his daughter, Mrs. Chamberlain, had been seen in London.

VIENNA.

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BISMARCK DECLINES A DUKEDOM.

BERLIN, April 27th.—Prince Bismarck has declined the title of Duke, on the ground that he is not in a position to support the dignity of the title.

VICTORIA REMOVED BOUND.

LONDON, April 27th.—Queen Victoria arrived at Finsbury, England, at 10 o'clock this morning, and embarked on the royal yacht for England.

TELEGRAPHIC BRITANNIES.

Ingalls will reply to Voorhes' speech next Tuesday.

The offers of General Condit yesterday amounted to \$48,000.

J. J. Stone has been convicted at Fresno of outraging a thirteen-year-old girl.

Jack Proter (colored) was hanged at Orangeburg, S. C., yesterday, and Jasper Davis at Anderson.

It is said that pugilist Sullivan got drunk on the voyage over from England, and raised the mischief on shipboard.

Frank Porter, who was recently killed by

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Among the late arrivals at Los Angeles, Cal., were a number of persons who were married several years ago. The husband is now ninety and the wife is now eighty. They were married in the year 1812. Mr. Richmond was a soldier and his wife was a nurse.

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C. P. Huntington gives a grand dinner to the officials of the Southern Pacific in the Palace Hotel on Tuesday evening next.

Annie Berry swears in a complaint that she was seduced by a man in 1880, and that she has been unable to get married on or about the 10th of June following. Annie asks that the Court give her \$25,000 damages against Woodford for breach of promise.

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IN YUCATAN.

MATTERS OF INTEREST IN SOUTH-EASTERN MEXICO.

A New Yorker's Mistaken Enterprise—Cocoon Culture and Other Industries.

(Special Correspondence of the RECORD-UNION.)

MEXICO, Yucatan, April 18, 1888.

Expecting some acquaintances on an incoming vessel, I made a trip to the coast a short time ago, and found myself standing on the very spot where white men first landed on this continent, weighted with swords and lances and clad in their ponderous armor. Out on the gulf was a steamer, tossed by the same restless waves that bore hither the fifteenth century galleons. But then it was the black velvet banner of Spain that floated over the decks from which thundered the fire-god so dreaded by the Indians, and on the up-lifted prow swarmed a land-scorpion, hardly and brilliant race, from a court like fairy land, with stern oars nailed to a crucifix—representatives of an army of crusaders and a navy that controlled the Mediterranean.

Sea and sky, sands and hills are still the same—yet how changed the scene! Now it was an American steamer, over which floated a flag unknown during the conquest of Yucatan; and over its bulwarks peered a race which had no place in the roll-call of the nations till long afterwards. With all our arrogance, so new are we of the United States.

The first question the Spaniards asked on landing was the name of the country they had come to. To designate to their King and the Catholic Church, and the wondering natives replied *Nathanelement*—"We do not understand you"—exactly as the Mexican of to-day would shrug his shoulders and say *no entiendo*. But the Spaniards accepted the reply as an answer to their question, and being unpronounceable to European tongues, *Nathanelement* became *Yucatan*, with *Yucateca* (a pearl), and finally degenerated into the word *Yucatan*.

In some respects this peninsula is not behind the rest of the world in the march of progress, and in others it is dead past all hope of resurrection. Officially, Yucatan is set down as containing seven cities besides Merida, the capital, and Progreso, the seaport; also 143 villages, 100 abandoned settlements, 62 ruined cities, and 354 haciendas. But many of the so-called "cities" are falling to decay, the towns are mere ruins, and the haciendas are enormous estates, for the most part comprising miles of uncultivated territory, whose owners live elsewhere. Though on the whole, Yucatan is dotted with evidences of civilization, in truth it is mainly a desert wilderness, with even less territory developed than when Don Juan de Grijalva here, or when Montezuma conquered the Aztecs, and he had subjugated the country.

But the present portion of the State is booming as never before. The total budget for last year was nearly \$400,000—of which the officials absorbed as much as they pleased. Within the last decade there has been a great increase in the business of all kinds is surprisingly active, and prices are about the same as in Havana. There are 227 schools in Yucatan, which annually pay to the Government \$72,120. There is also a Literary Institute, which has an invested capital of \$90,485, and whose profit averages over \$7,000 a year. The State of Yucatan also has invested capital to the amount of \$19,590, on which it annually realizes about \$1,500. Both these institutions pay a rich dividend to many a mine in sunny Mexico.

The School of Pharmacy and Jurisprudence has six professors. There is also a prosperous medical college, a conservatory of music, and several public libraries, which enrich the finest museums of the world.

In Merida is a splendid museum of antiquities—or rather the building is very fine which the Museo Yucateco occupies. It is a noteworthy peninsula, though the sum of \$50,020 was expended last year for internal improvements in the State of Yucatan, but \$600 of it has been set aside for the museum.

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In Yucatan every man between the ages of 21 and 50 is subject to military duty and may be drafted at any time. He then receives the munificent salary of *centos a day*, and finds himself in food. There is no commissary department whatever, and at that rate he can certainly afford to maintain a "standing" army.

As for railroads in this remote region, there is the Merida & Peto line, passing by Ticul and Tekah, chartered about ten years ago and given a subsidy of \$0.00 per kilometer; the Merida, Kankin & Celestun Railroad, chartered eight years ago and promised an equal subsidy; the Merida & Valladolid Railroad, chartered same year with same subsidy—all yet under construction. The Progress & Merida road was chartered in 1874, with a subsidy of \$22,000, and has long been in full operation.

The Valladolid & San Carlos road, chartered six years ago, is projected from Valladolid to San Carlos, on the Caribbean Sea. All these are in Northern Yucatan, and the great body of the peninsula is still virtually inaccessible. The New York, Havana & Mexican Mail Steamship Company's vessels call at Progreso during every trip, and the steamship line of Bolson Brothers sends ships to the same port on their trips up and down the Gulf.

Through the cultivation of the silk hemp, or hempen, is, as before said, the main industry of Yucatan, it is by no means the only one. In the opinion of many the day is not distant when manila hemp (from *Musa Javanica*), which grows in the Philippine Islands, will entirely supplant the indigenous silk, and monopolize the trade of the world. The silk or hempen (*agave*) comes from the agave plant, adapted to the worn-out soil of this peninsula and the lazy habits of its people, while manila, to thrive here, needs considerable attention. But the silk or hempen is the strongest and best fiber known, and will always command the highest price in market, and it has been demonstrated that with proper care it will grow here as well as in Asia, its original home.

Sisal is best propagated by cuttings, the young plants being allowed to grow at will until three years old, after which they are transplanted in fields set out in regular rows. They are of slow growth, but will last for many years. From time to time, as they mature and lengthen, the leaves are cut, from the ground, by a queer instrument, called a *corba*—a cross between a sickle and a dagger—is used in cutting them. In arid soil and upon the expanded the stalks are set at intervals from a foot above the ground, the coarse, thick leaves—six or eight inches wide, clustering around it. On the lowlands the leaves are much smaller, and grow from three to six feet long and produce better fiber. If allowed to remain on the stalk they continue green the entire life of the plant.

Until a few years ago Yucatan hemp was cleaned by the most primitive process—simply pounding the leaves between the hands and then whipping them to strip off the outer coat, yet even when prepared in this rough way it retained great strength and durability.

It is now cleaned by passing it over a large, toothed wheel, propelled by steam. The large leaf is thrust in forward of the wheel, the teeth seize it, and in a second moment is left but a mass of fiber clinging to the butt of the leaf which the operator still holds in his hands. A similar process converts this mass into a bunch of clear fiber. The wheel above imperfectly described is about the size of a barrel, and is placed in use in Yucatan. The laborers carry the leaves upon their backs to the cleaning-wheel, a bundle of twenty-five

leaves being all that a man can stagger under.

After the hemp is thus cleaned, it is tied into small "hanks," and these are pressed into bales, weighing per bale from 350 to 500 lbs. When bound in the form of the same fiber, the special mark of the grower or shipper placed on them, and then they are started on their two weeks' voyage to New York.

Manila is not treated in quite the same way in its Philippine Island home. The plant is like a banana tree, often growing to a height of 15 feet, with only a single tuft of leaves growing out of the top. When properly matured, it is cut at the root and the leaves are pulled off to the very bottom of the tree. Formerly these strips were then broken up into small pieces, with clubs, until the pulp was broken up; when it was scraped with dull knives to cleanse the fiber from all foreign substances. But now improved machinery has been introduced into that far-away country, and it is cleaned in about the same manner as sisal, only more care is required as the fiber is often 15 feet long. After being cleaned, it is tied up in hanks, pressed into bales of 270 pounds each, covered with grass matting, bound tightly with rattan, and in that condition is four months' voyage to the United States.

Not long ago a gentleman from Brooklyn, N. Y., came down to this region—to hunt hemp, so he said, but expecting to find something else which would throw that fiber all in the shade as a source of export wealth. He brought down a ship from New Orleans, and went cruising along the coast of Yucatan, and the most fragrant islands of the Caribbean Sea—for guano. He loaded his ship with what he believed to be the valuable fertilizer, but when it came out to be nothing in the world but the coarse sand peculiar to this locality which the deluded New Yorker had scooped up by the ton.

That reminds me of an enterprising capitalist from New England, who lately started an extensive cocoon plantation near Merida. On a tract of 1,000 acres he has set out 10,000 trees, and expects to make therefrom a princely fortune. It requires six years, I am told, for the trees to begin to yield returns, and it is estimated that in ten years the time of planting, the grove aforesaid will pay 10 per cent. on a valuation of \$2,000,000, \$40,000 having been invested.

A large grove tree will mature from 60 to 100 tons annually. In reality, the cocoon is one of the most valuable trees in the world, nearly every part of it being of use. The fruit is eaten by the young roots, and weaves them into baskets. The tender leaves are cooked, like cabbage, and the old leaves are made into cloth, hats, baskets, fans, lanterns, etc. It is also used for being for clothing, and for making hats, even for writing paper. The magnificent trunk of the tree furnishes cane, house posts and fences. The ribs of the leaves are used for making excellent paddles for boats, arrows, combs, torches, and no end of other things. When the tree is burned it makes the very best fuel for cooking. By a process of fermentation good vinegar can be obtained from the wood, and also a fair kind of sugar, which the Yucatecos call "jaguary." The name of the tree is derived from the Portuguese word *coco*, and the English word *cocoa*, which means "an ugly mask," and is said to have been given because the end of a cocoon looks like a donkey's face.

Raising a vegetable silk is another fiber whose cultivation is destined to become of great importance, and much attention is now being paid to it. It grows wild in the hot sands of the coast, and is here known as "silk-grass." It is a member of the *brassicaceae* family, and produces a beautiful, long, glossy fiber, to-day worth 35 cents per pound at Merida, where the demand is immensely ahead of the present supply.

In this part of the hemisphere we are sometimes badly bothered with grasshoppers as Kansas used to be. Not long ago the vicinity of Ticul was visited by clouds of them. After devouring all the crops, and utterly ruining several haciendas, they settled down into Landa, Ticul, and soon the inhabitants were obliged to turn out en masse and fish them out and bury them in trenches, for the millions of dead insects began to taint the air in a horrible manner.

FANNIE B. WARD.

ODDITIES OF GENIUS AT WORK.

The Eccentricities of Some of the Famous Men of the World.

Voltaire had in his room sometimes five desks, at which he pursued different tasks. The great reasoner, Balzac, after a frugal dinner at 6 o'clock, would be called at midnight, when he took a cup of black coffee, or green tea, and extremely strong, and worked till noon.

Pitt never ate but at his own table, which was frugal; only when he had some important affair to discuss he took a little piece with a spoonful of Peruvian bark.

Addison speaks of an advocate who would never plead a case without having his head in the end of a thread drawn tightly around one of his thumbs all the time his speech lasted. The wags said it was the thread of his discourse.

Dr. Shapton relates that an celebrated advocate of London always applied a blister to his arm whenever he had an important case to plead.

The historian, Mezeray, would work only with a candle, even at midnight and in summer. He never failed to wait on his visitors, even to the street with a candle in his hand.

Gretry, to amuse himself when composing, breakfasted and took coffee, and then applied himself day and night to his piano.

Boswell worked in a cold room, with his head wrapped in a towel, before composing, put his feet in cold water.

Guido Renzi painted with much pomp. He dressed himself magnificently, and had his valet attend him in silence ranged around him.

Sarti, the musician, composed only in darkness.

Miguel Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Titian, Rubens, passed from the chisel to the pen or the brush. The change rested them from the preceding work; and thus, during long life, they accomplished marvelous works.

Some persons can think only standing, or in walking the room in swift strides. Some, like Montaigne, compose in a postchaise.

One has used of complete isolation, profound calm; another of the open air and noise of the crowd.

Buflon went in face ruffles; Alexander Dumas in a velvet smoking jacket, and Milton composed his "Paradise Lost" on a large arm chair and his head thrown back.

When Fox had eaten heartily he would retire to his study, envelope his head in a napkin soaked in vinegar and water, and work sometimes ten hours in succession.

Jerome Bonaparte, who was called a little squares of paper, which he piled upon each other, and this little pile of papers stitched together were the first form of his manuscripts.

Napoleon's his particular mode of meditation and work. When he was not in council he staid in his study, talked to himself and sang, or, like a child, cut up his chair; then suddenly rising up, would give the plan of a monument to be erected, or of one of the great military movements which astonished the world.—*Kansas City Star*.

Picture frames are now made of paper and colored like water, and are so perfect that no one could detect them without cutting them. Paper pulp, glue, lincos oil and carbonate of lime or whitening are mixed together and heated into a thick cream, which, when being cooled to cool, is run into molds and hardened.

It is your duty to yourself to get rid of the old accumulations in your blood this spring. Hood's Sarsaparilla is the best medicine you need to purify, vitalize and enrich your blood.

FRESNO.

(CONTINUED FROM SECOND PAGE.)

Mrs. White then showed us some of her mammoth raisins. Six in a row had a total of seven inches. Glancing again at the scarlet blossoms of the pomegranate, and the delicate buds of the olive trees, and the gigantic leaves of the fan-palm, we bade Mrs. White good-bye and proceeded down the avenue, where the magnificent rows of elms, which continue beyond here without a break for four miles.

The road was rocky, C. Smith, of Washington colony, who said: "My twenty acres of raisin vines

yielded me last year fifty tons of raisins, which I sold to Messrs. Meade & Co. at five cents a pound, unpacked, amounting to \$5,000, or \$200 per acre. I have three acres of orchard, the proceeds of which I also marketed green, for \$300, but my trees were young, being the first year's bearing. I do not work my land myself, but hire all my labor. My one Chinaman takes care of plowing, and I cultivate my forty acres, and do all the work with the exception of harvesting and pruning, which I have to have several Chinamen to help him."

Another colonist

Neil Hansen said: "I own forty acres of land in Fresno county. From twelve to fifteen acres of grapes (mostly wine grapes) are in bearing, and we sold the peaches this year for \$800. We keep from two to four cows. At present we have only two. I am getting now from \$30 to \$40 a week for my butter. Sometimes my chickens bring me in \$5 a week. This of course, does not continue all the year. During the months of June and July chickens do not lay so plentifully. I am satisfied with my place. We have now purchased forty acres more, which we hope this year to get under cultivation."

A Britisher's views.

W. Conlan, East avenue: "I am a Britisher, and came here from India. I have seen the world, and I believe there is no better place on the face of the globe for a

man who wants to make a living under such favorable conditions as in Fresno. We have twelve acres of vines in bearing, from which I made last year sixteen tons of raisins, which I sold for \$100 a ton, or \$1,600. We have two and one-half acres of apricots, which I sold this year for \$571, or \$228 an acre. The only expense we are put to in marketing fruit is the picking and hauling it to the market. I keep my entire family in food and clothing, and my family is not a small one. We have four children, wife and myself."

Successful productions.

T. J. Chambers, Cedar avenue, said: "I am cultivating eighty acres of land here, of which twenty acres are in vines which

than twelve months ago, for \$4,500. I am situated only two miles from town. When I bought this place it was sadly neglected. I realized about \$1,000 out of it the first year. The apricot and part of the peach crop had been marketed before I purchased it. I had one and one-half acres of muscat vines in full bearing. This crop I picked and marketed myself, and it fetched \$540, or \$500 an acre. The raisins I sold in bulk, and had never packed. Had I packed them I could have realized more, but then I should have had the trouble of packing."

LANDS WEST AND NORTH.

In these directions the population is sparse, and much of the land is yet virgin soil. The lands are quoted at prices varying from \$20 to \$40 per acre, but we find

ing else. It begins to yield a return the first year it is sown, and the second year is in full bearing condition. The level nature of the soil, and the abundant water facilities of Fresno county render alfalfa production here extremely profitable. It produces an average of five to eight tons per acre, which sells in the winter at about \$10 per ton. Three and four crops are cut per year, the cost being about \$2 per acre for each crop harvested. Alfalfa ordinarily yields an annual net profit of from \$10 to \$60 per acre.

There are several large stock ranches on the irrigated lands of Fresno, containing from 300 to 600 acres of alfalfa. One section of land devoted to alfalfa, and with abundant water for irrigation, is an investment which will support

more live stock than ten times the number of acres of alfalfa with water.

MISCELLANEOUS PRODUCTS.

Many valuable crops, besides raisins, grapes and fruit, can be raised in Fresno. Alfalfa is a remunerative crop, and one of the most profitable of all. Sweet potatoes, as well as the common variety, are a sure crop. Peasants are at home in this soil. Most kinds of vegetables grow here in luxuriance. Blackberries grow to mammoth size, and often bear the first crop of the season in this county. The interest can be extended indefinitely as soon as any market for eggs or coconuts can be certain, and the people can be induced to enter upon the business. Hops grow

to learn of any changing hands at the present time.

A Scandinavian, possessed with an unpronounceable name, went three miles from town, and has since leveled the land, and planted 60 acres of Muscat vines. The result of this experiment may help to solve the question as to whether or not these lands are of any practical use for horticultural purposes, or only for turkey pasture, to which they are now mostly devoted.

Fresno seems to be built immediately on the dividing line between the different climates mentioned. Land underneath proved east or south, within two or three miles of town, is held at from \$300 to \$1,000 per acre. West and north, as above stated. Further on in the colonies, desirable lands are yet to be had at prices within the

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